

# Bachelor of Liberal Arts (B.L.A.)

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# Bachelor of Liberal Arts (B.L.A.)

The College of Arts and Sciences offers the bachelor of liberal arts (B.L.A.) degree for individuals who seek scientific literacy, an understanding of the social sciences and an appreciation of the humanities. The B.L.A. is an alternative to the B.A./B.S. degree programs and is for individuals who do not wish to commit themselves to a specialty, whose aspirations are not served by a traditional major, and who desire maximum flexibility in course selection. Additional students who have found the B.L.A. degree particularly beneficial are those who have matriculated into the six-year medical program and pursue the combined B.L.A./MD degrees and those students wishing to apply to the UMKC School of Law through the Early Entry Law Program.

The B.L.A. degree can also be earned through the Program for Adult College Education, PACE. This program makes it possible for individuals with full-time work or home responsibilities to complete a baccalaureate degree in a reasonable time by attending class in the evenings and on weekends, by registering for the corresponding independent study courses, by connecting to on-line courses via the Internet, and through approved internships.

For a detailed description of this program, see the Program for Adult College Education (PACE) section in the program listings under the College's section of the catalog.

## Potential for Graduate Study

Students completing the B.L.A. degree have the potential to pursue graduate study in many areas. One option is the master of arts in liberal studies, a master's degree similar in structure to the B.L.A., which continues the tradition of interdisciplinary work in the College at the intermediate level between baccalaureate and doctoral work. Students completing the B.L.A. degree who wish to continue their education at the graduate level are strongly encouraged to seek counsel from a graduate adviser in that discipline early in their undergraduate career.

## Curriculum Degree Requirements

### Hour Requirements and Eligibility

A 2.0 GPA is required to declare intent to pursue the B.L.A. degree. Additionally, a 2.0 overall GPA is required by the University of Missouri for graduation. At least 30 hours of coursework must be earned after declaration of intent to pursue a B.L.A. degree.

A minimum of 120 hours is required for graduation. At least 90 of these hours must be earned in the arts and sciences. At least 36 of the total hours must be at the junior/senior (300-400) level in The College of Arts and Sciences.

The credit/non-credit option is not available for students pursuing this degree.

### Area Requirements and Limitations Applicable to This Degree

The B.L.A. degree is separated into three divisions:

- Humanities
- Natural Sciences/Math
- Social Sciences

At least 21 hours must be earned from each division above; however, no more than 60 hours from any one division may be applied toward the B.L.A. degree. Additionally, coursework must be taken from at least two departments in each division, with no more than 21 hours taken in any one department.

Students should note that some departments within The College of Arts and Sciences (for example, geosciences and history departments) offer coursework that can be applied to more than one division. Students should consult with an adviser in selecting coursework to ensure that they receive proper credit in the various divisions required for the degree.

Students are encouraged to identify one of the three divisions as an area of concentration up to the 60-credit-hour maximum. The curriculum of this concentration area should match the student's particular interests and should be designed in conjunction with an adviser. Additionally, students who wish to have a more specific focus within a division of the B.L.A. degree may elect to complete a minor through an academic department.

### Minor Option

Students may elect to complete a minor by working with the departmental adviser corresponding to the minor selected. Students must keep in mind that the 21 hour maximum in any one department still applies to students pursuing a minor through the B.L.A. degree.

Among the minimum 21 hours in each division, the following specific requirements must be included:

### Humanities Division

All students pursuing the B.L.A. degree must complete a minimum of 21 credit hours in the humanities division. A maximum of 60 credit hours from the humanities may be applied towards the B.L.A. degree. Additionally, a maximum of 21 credit hours may be taken from any one department. Students may select humanities courses from the following departments/areas:

- Art and Art History;
- Communication Studies;
- English;
- Foreign Languages;
- Philosophy;
- Theatre; or
- Other courses designated specifically as Humanities

Specific requirements include:

1. English 110 or Humanities 105P.
  - This requirement should be taken as early as possible, preferably in the first semester of enrollment.
  - This requirement may be satisfied by scoring a 30 or higher on the English subsection of the ACT or a 690 on the verbal subsection of the SAT.
2. English 225 or Humanities 202P. Students are encouraged to complete this requirement during their sophomore year.
3. The UMKC Written English Proficiency Test (WEPT). The WEPT is a prerequisite for all Writing Intensive courses and should be taken after a student has completed English 225 and 45 credit hours. The WEPT is also a graduation requirement for all students. Those who fail the WEPT twice must take English 299; this course, which does not count towards the degree, will satisfy the WEPT requirement for students who earn a C- or better in the course. The WEPT is given twice each semester; the dates of the test appear regularly on the academic calendar in the Schedule of Classes.
4. A Writing Intensive course. Writing Intensive courses are designated with WI or PW following the course number. Writing Intensive courses should be completed during the junior or senior year and after the completion of the three requirements above.

## Natural Sciences/Math Division

All students pursuing the B.L.A. degree must complete a minimum of 21 credit hours in the natural sciences/math division. A maximum of 60 credit hours from natural sciences/math may be applied towards the B.L.A. degree. Additionally, a maximum of 21 credit hours may be taken from any one department. Students may select natural science/math courses from the following departments/areas:

- Chemistry;
- Computer Science or Information Technology;
- Environmental Science;
- Geography (physical geography only, which includes: 150, 215, 314, 317, 319, 335, 336, 360, 401, 402, 404, 426, 430, 442, 444, or 448);
- Geology;
- Math;
- Physical Science;
- Physics;
- Biology; or
- Other courses designated specifically as Natural Science.

Specific requirements include:

1. Mathematics (3 hours minimum). To fulfill this requirement, each student must:
  - Demonstrate mathematical competency equivalent to four units (years) of acceptable high school mathematics, beginning with Algebra I or higher; or
  - Complete Mathematics 110, 116, 120, 160 or 210.
2. Laboratory Science Course (4 hours minimum). At least one science course of the minimum 21 hours in this division must include a laboratory component.

## Social Sciences Division

All students pursuing the B.L.A. degree must complete a minimum of 21 credit hours in the social sciences division. A maximum of 60 credit hours from the social sciences may be applied towards the B.L.A. degree. Additionally, a maximum of 21 credit hours may be taken from any one department. Students may select social science courses from the following departments/areas:

- Criminal Justice and Criminology;
- Economics;
- Geography (regional or cultural, which includes 105, 200, 202, 210, 300, 309, 311, 329, 332, 333, 340, 341, 342, 350, 351, 352, 355, 398, 403, 405, 410, 415, 435, 437, 460, 489, or 496 only);
- History;
- Political Science;
- Psychology;
- Sociology; or
- Other courses designated specifically as Social Science.

Specific requirements include a Constitution Requirement (3 hours minimum). Every student must fulfill the Missouri state requirement to take a course covering the United States Constitution and the Missouri State Constitution before graduation. Courses that satisfy this requirement are:

- History 101, 102 or 360R (American History);
- Political Science 210 (American Government); or
- Social Science 102P.

## Student Learning Outcomes

### Bachelor of Liberal Arts

Students graduating with a baccalaureate degree in liberal arts will have developed:

- A broad knowledge of the natural sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities.
- Critical thinking and problem solving abilities.
- Awareness of diverse values and points of view.
- Interpersonal skills.
- Oral and written communication skills.